


Doc News and Views



Marlboro
the kids' favorite brand
presents

Danny's Celebrity Cigarette
Ski Challenge Sellout

See charisma cover up cancer.

Watch Marlboro's "athletes"
mooch the 390,000 U.S.
cigarette deaths each year.

See Danny win.
See Aspen lose.

Marlboro makes us sick.

Let's Skip the Challenge.

Love Doc

Skip the Challenge

From the series, THE SEVEN EARLY SIGNS OF CANCER.

DOC, founded in 1977, is a national non-profit health promotion organization with more than 5000 members. For information on DOC's outrageous T-shirts and the new video "Cigarettes and Sports: Striking Out Against Tobacco", write DOC Tobacco Archive, 8810 Green Belt, Houston TX 77005

Senate Hears Key DOC Testimony on Counter-advertising

"What is needed, then, is to counter the strong, engaging, omnipresent images of cigarette advertising--to laugh at the Marlboro man," DOC founder Alan Blum, MD, stated in his testimony to the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee on February 20, 1990. "We cannot do this with public service spots at 3 a.m. or earnest lectures in health ed class. Rather, we need to create an appeal for not buying cigarettes and do it through sophisticated, ubiquitous, good-humored imagery. What is needed is, in brief, paid advertising space financed in part by existing tobacco excise taxes and in part from revenues that would be derived from ending tobacco promoters' deductibility of cigarette advertising as a business expense."

The occasion was the first U.S. Senate hearing in 20 years to address the subject of cigarette advertising. All major television and radio networks and the print media

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"Skip the Challenge" counter advertisement by DOC P.U. Project artist Doug Minkler. Below left: Marlboro banner looms over a young skier at the Jackson Hole Ski resort in Wyoming.



DOC Ads and Activists Efforts Trigger Anti-Tobacco Avalanche on Ski Slopes

Ski resorts in the Rocky Mountains will soon no longer be part of "Marlboro Country" as a direct result of concerted efforts by national DOC and local DOC chapters in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and Denver, Colorado. Prior to the 1990 Marlboro Celebrity Ski Challenge in Aspen, Colorado DOC President Jeff Cain, MD, along with a coalition of several other health promotion organizations (GASP, CAFF, ARCS, and others) sponsored an advertisement which appeared in the *Aspen Times* and the *Aspen Daily News* that read "Aspen, Ashtray of the Rockies? The tobacco industry attempts to sell its products by associating themselves with quality and healthy activities. By sponsoring the 1990 Celebrity Ski Challenge, Marlboro is trying to 'buy' the reputation of Aspen. Cigarette smoking causes more

premature deaths than AIDS, cocaine, heroin, alcohol, fire, automobile accidents, homicides and suicide combined. Aspen doesn't need this kind of reputation. 'Just say no' to tobacco industry money."

National DOC also sponsored a counter-advertisement designed by DOC P.U. Project artist Doug Minkler. The advertisements pointedly illustrated to Aspen residents the unethical and illogical practice of tobacco companies sponsoring a healthy sport.

The Blue Letters

A few hundred miles away in Jackson Hole, Wyoming DOC President Brent Blue, MD, launched a counterattack on Marlboro sponsorship of a coin operated race course at the Jackson Hole Ski Resort. Dr. Blue expressed his concern that "tobacco companies advertising in association with athletic

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covered the hearing.

Dr. Blum's presentation, which included a videotape of tobacco promotions couched as sporting events followed the testimony of Health and Human Services Secretary Louis Sullivan. In contrast to Secretary Sullivan, who endorsed the bill's good intentions but not the fiscal allocation, Dr. Blum described the amount required as minimal and about the same as the profit that currently accrues to tobacco companies just from the sale of cigarettes to children under the age of 16.

The bill calls for \$185 million to be spent on regulation of tobacco products, anti-smoking advertising and educational programs. An additional \$90 million would be designated to establish a Center for Tobacco Products within the Federal Centers for Disease Control. The new organization would have the authority to regulate tobacco products in the same way food and drugs are regulated by the FDA.

The following is an excerpt from Dr. Blum's testimony to the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee on February 20, 1990:

"Despite an advertising blitzkrieg second to none, the tobacco and advertising industries would have the public believe that adolescents have heard the facts about 'both sides' and now have a 'free choice' to



DOC Founder Alan Blum, MD, testifies to the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee on February 20, 1990.

decide whether or not to smoke 'when they grow up.' In claiming that it does not approve of young people smoking, the tobacco industry offers 'peer pressure, parental smoking and a climate of general rebelliousness among teenagers' as the reasons for adolescents taking up this neglected cornerstone of drug abuse. Meanwhile, the tobacco industry runs a year-round campaign with virtually no planned exposure for opposing messages (\$3 billion annually vs. less than \$4 million in government public service announcements, pamphlets, and posters) in newspapers, magazines, supermarkets, and television. Every child grows up seeing thousands of larger-than-life billboards for cigarettes and countless sports-associated tobacco promotions. The formula for these promotions is both simple and insidious, invariably involving a community's newspaper and its top youth-oriented radio station as co-sponsors.

"Support for visible counter-advertising of the kind pioneered by DOC is urgently needed to offset the long years of ubiquitous, unchallenged cigarette advertisements. Classroom-based education with emphasis on the harmful effects of smoking is only one limited way to tackle the adolescent smoking pandemic. Cigarette advertising and promotion can keep up with the latest fad in its portrayal of smoking and so remain 'in' far better than even the most talented and motivated teachers and parents.

"Counter-advertising helps to educate young people not only about the preventable factors responsible for bad health and high medical costs but also about the insidiousness of the outright promotion of those factors.

"The cost figures cited in this bill are

much-needed if we are to immunize the next generation against the willful deceptiveness of cigarette advertising. In addition to the precedent for successful counter-advertising between 1967 and 1970, there are also precedents for government expenditures on public interest advertising, such as current military recruitment promotions during televised sporting events and various efforts a decade ago to conserve energy and to lessen dependence on foreign oil supplies. In the case of smoking, purchase of advertising space is especially essential. Unlike the heavily publicized Media-Advertising Partnership for a Drug-Free America, which has received hundreds of millions of dollars in donated space in the printed media and free air time on television and radio, media corporations are too covetous of tobacco industry advertising revenues to run free advertising to discourage the sale of cigarettes and other tobacco products.

"Perhaps it is time for a Private Citizen Partnership for a Tobacco-Free Media. In the meantime, I hope the advertising and media industries will break ranks with the tobacco companies and support this bill. This would not only be to their best financial interests by virtue of the receipt of advertising revenue but also would be consistent with the positions leaders in the media who oppose banning tobacco advertising altogether.

"The power of advertising to shape purchasing decisions, stimulate sales, and promote brand name loyalty is well-documented. It has certainly created a huge following for cigarettes. It stands to reason that the same mix of marketing creative and strategic planning skills could generate persuasive and compelling anti-smoking advertising."

DOC News and Views is a publication of Doctors Ought to Care. DOC is a coalition of health professionals and other concerned individuals that is helping to educate the public, especially young people, about the major preventable causes of poor health and high medical costs. Our focus is the "killer habits" with particular emphasis on counteracting the promotion of tobacco and alcohol. DOC's professional aim is to tap the highest possible level of commitment and involvement in their communities from physicians, medical students, other health professionals, business leaders and all other citizens. DOC is unique among health organizations in being solely concerned with health promotion, and has pioneered the concept of paid advertising aimed at reducing lethal lifestyles.

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